GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:258
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2007
CENTRALLY PROTECTED MONUMENTS/ SITES
Jha Shri Raghunath

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Centrally protected monuments/sites of national importance at present;

(b) whether a large number of centrally protected monuments/sites of national importance are lying unattended;

(c) if so, whether some monuments are under encroachment;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to remove the encroachment; and

(e) the efforts made by the ASI for integrated infrastructure development and conservation/ preservation of all monuments/sites with facilities for tourists, so as to give a major fillip to cultural tourism in the country as well as attract overseas visitors?

Answer

MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI)

(a)to(e) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a)TO (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.258 FOR 15.3.2007 REGARDING CENTRALLY PROTECTED MONUMENTS/SITES

There are 3667 centrally protected monuments/sites which have been declared as of national importance. The Archaeological Survey of India undertakes their regular conservation and preservation by way of structural repairs, chemical treatment, laying of gardens and day to day maintenance as per archaeological norms subject to availability of resources.

There are instances of encroachments in some of the centrally protected monuments and a detailed list (State-wise) is at Annexure.

In order to contain the encroachments and removing them, the Superintending Archaeologist in charge of the Circles have been vested with the powers of an Estate Officer to issue eviction notices/orders to the encroachers under Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971. They are also authorised to issue show cause notices under the provisions of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and Rules 1959 followed by a direction to the District Collector /Magistrate by Central Government to remove such encroachment under section 19 (2) of the Act and Rules 38 (2) of the Rule. Assistance in containing and removing encroachments is also sought from the respective State Government/police force and where there are no fruitful results, actions are initiated against the encroachers by filing cases in the court of law.

In addition to the regular watch and ward staff, private security personnel, State police guards and CISF have also been provided for the safety and security of selected monuments. Efforts have also been made to fence the centrally protected monuments in a phased manner.

Apart from this, Archaeological Survey of India has also issued a notification declaring areas upto 100 metres from the protected limits of centrally protected monuments as a prohibited area where all constructions and mining activities are banned. Another 200 metres beyond this limit has been declared as regulated area where construction/mining activity is permitted only in accordance with the terms and conditions of the licence issued by the Archaeological Survey of India.

In order to promote cultural tourism around the protected monuments, the Archaeological Survey of India has taken up projects for the provision of tourist related facilities like drinking water, toilet blocks, approach roads, pathways, signages, publication counters, etc. at the various monuments. In addition, such facilities are also provided under public-private partnership through the National Culture Fund in selected monuments. Archaeological Survey of India is also preparing integrated site management plans for World Heritage Sites.